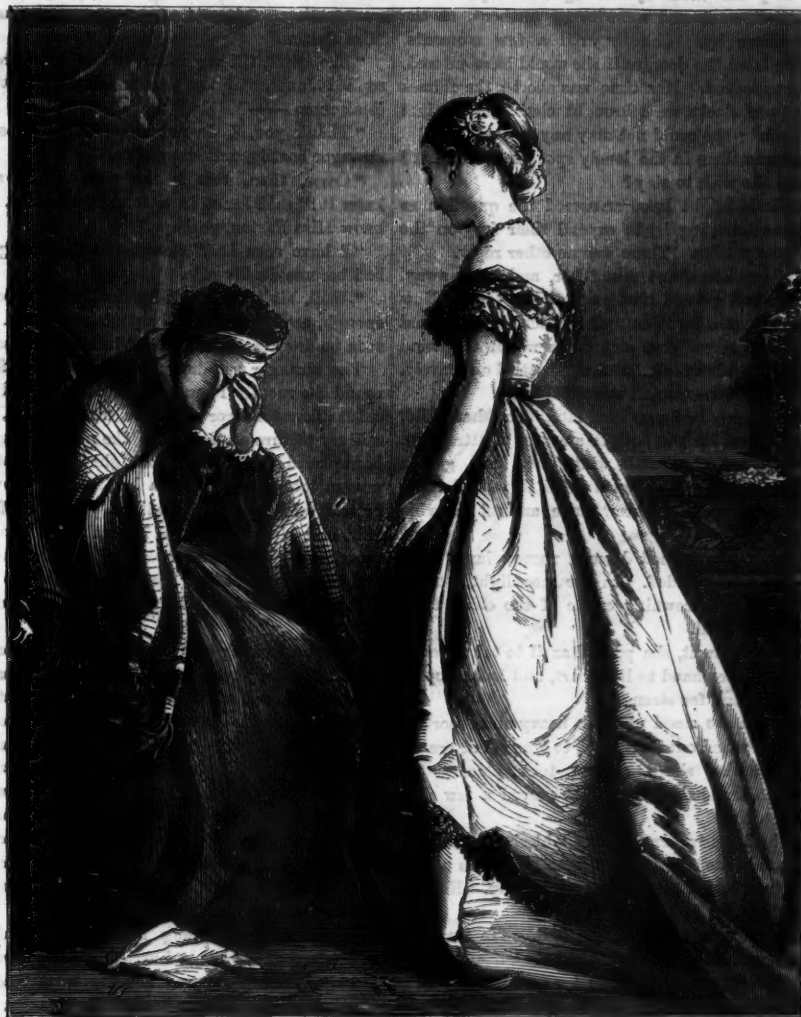


THE QUIVER

Saturday, October 16, 1869.



"It is as we thought—that wretched marriage!"—p. 19.

IN DUTY BOUND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MARK WARREN," "DEEPDALE VICARAGE," "A BRAVE LIFE," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER IV.—COULD THIS BE MARGARET?

THE woman, stranger though she seemed, knew every step of the way. She did not go direct to the point. An irresistible influence seized upon her. She hurried along in the direction of the old mill.

As she hurried, she often pressed her hand to her heart. Once she stopped, and gasped as if for breath; and once she bowed her head, and joined her hands as if in prayer; then, she hurried on again.

The old mill was in a rather lonely spot on the suburbs of the town. It was forsaken and disused. An old dilapidated house stood beside it. The house had no inhabitants, it was disused as well. She glanced at the blank uncurtained windows. She could only see them by the light of a pale fitful moon, that went and came every moment, as the clouds drove by. She lingered a few moments. Once she tried the door, as if she would have entered, but it was locked. Her time was short; the chimes of the town clocks were brought clear and distinct by the wind; she could not stay any longer.

What was there in the lonely spot so dear to her? Why did she wish to stay?

The winds might have answered the question as they came hurrying by to expend their fury on the bleak open yonder. There was no other reply.

She drew her shawl round her, and went away. Soon she had quitted that part of the town. Now she came upon a broad turnpike, which lay white and bare in the moonlight, and down which the wind swept right in her teeth. But she battled on bravely. The energy of the woman was wonderful.

Her thoughts had wandered lately from her child, but they went back to it as to a centre of attraction. She could see the small white face and golden clustering hair, the tiny hands and little wasted arms; and as she thought, she grew brave, and set the wind at naught.

By-and-by she turned down a narrow lane. Her walk was nearly ended. In the moonlight, looking like some black frowning castle of the olden time, was Bramley Hall.

When she saw it, she paused as if to take breath. She pressed her hand to her heart, and looked up as if to the Strong for strength.

Very soon she stood under a heavy stone portico, and had reached out her hand to ring; but ere she did so, another sharp conflict took place. She glanced at her shabby dress, and moved a few steps away.

Which of the two entrances ought she to choose?

"Oh, this one!" And she came back with a flush on her face, and a slight curl on her lip. Nothing should force her to take the other.

A servant-man answered the bell. He stared at her with more surprise than civility.

"Is Miss Easton at home?" asked the woman in a faltering voice.

"She's engaged, my good woman. Besides, this is the wrong door for such as you; you should have gone——"

He stopped. There was a flush on the cheek, and the head was raised proudly. Something told him that in spite of appearances the stranger was a lady.

"Miss Easton has a party to-night, and can't see any one," added the man, rather puzzled, and in a more respectful tone.

"I will not detain her. I only want to speak to

her a few moments. I have come a long, long way," said the woman in a pleading tone. The look of wounded pride had vanished almost as soon as it came.

"Oh, I do not want to hinder you from seeing her. Janet!" added he, turning to a young woman who was passing. "Here's a person says she must see Miss Easton."

"She can't, till my mistress has done dressing," replied Janet, "if the person likes to wait in the cloak room——"

"Thank you, I do not mind waiting," said the stranger hastily, and stepped in.

"Come, then, this is the way. Oh, I see you know it!" said Janet in a tone of surprise. "You know Miss Easton, perhaps."

"I have seen her," stammered the stranger, who had become deadly pale.

"Well, sit there a bit by the fire, you look bad enough, anyhow. There's my mistress's bell. She'll soon be down now," and Janet bustled off again.

The stranger sat down, and glanced half fearfully round the room. It was a small room, and had an old-fashioned mirror over the mantel-piece, and a solitary picture on the wall. The picture might have been placed here to be out of sight and memory. The woman looked at it with a half smile. It was the portrait of a young girl with a profusion of golden hair, and blue eyes which had rather a pensive expression. There was a wreath of roses on her head, and roses were at her feet. A name was written under the portrait—"Margaret, on her seventeenth birthday."

She was looking at the picture, when a step was heard. At the sound of it she started and trembled, and sunk into her chair. The next moment, a lady entered the room—no more terrific object than that. The lady was young—younger, to judge from appearance, by twenty years at least, than the stranger. She was richly dressed. Her silken train swept the ground, and she had jewels in her hair, and on her neck and arms. No, she was not the Margaret of the picture. Her hair was black, and her face, though very handsome, had sternness and decision in it. There was a trace of likeness, but no more.

She came in, clapping her bracelet, and rather in haste. She gave a hurried glance towards the stranger, but there was not the least recognition. There never would have been, if the stranger had not said "Adela!"

The golden bracelet dropped on the floor. She picked it up again. She rarely lost her self-possession. She laid the bracelet on the table, and her keen black eyes were riveted on the stranger.

Gradually, light broke in upon the darkness. A fact forced itself on her mind that was very startling and unexpected. The woman was her sister!

She advanced a step—without, however, holding out her hand. She was evidently perplexed as to

what she should do. She had to take a few moments to consider, then it came into her mind what the right thing was. She took the forlorn woman in her arms and kissed her. It was not a warm embrace, and when it was over the sisters stood apart again.

"Things have gone hard with you, Margaret," said the richer sister coldly, and evidently embarrassed by the presence of the poorer one. "It is as we thought—that wretched marriage!"

"It was not wretched; it was happy and blessed," replied the other eagerly. "He was the best, the kindest, the dearest——"

She broke down, and hid her face in her hands. Again you looked for tears, but they came not. When she raised her head, the other saw how it was.

She caught sight of the badge of widowhood, and said hastily, almost with exultation, "Ah! he is dead!"

She was sorry when she had said it; but she had been taught to look upon him as the marplot of the family.

Again the sisters were silent. The widow bent her head, as though some wintry blast were passing over it. A perplexing question was rising to the lips of Adela: "What was her sister's errand?"

Could she look at her and ask it? Did she not come for help—for money—perhaps for refuge? And would their father ever grant it?

The marriage had taken place some years ago, when Adela was a child at school.

She had never been told all the particulars. She knew that Margaret's lover had no wealth, or even a position; that his profession was a very precarious one. He had been an artist, and what (as the old man said) could be more unsatisfactory than that?

In fact, he was opposed to the attachment altogether.

It was never clearly known by Adela whether her sister's disobedience was absolute and wilful. Whether in despite of her father's will she married Ernest Seymour—for this was the name of her lover. At any rate, she married him from her own home. But her father never forgave it. When she was on her wedding journey, he wrote and told her so; and he forbade her to return, on any pretext whatever.

The more he mused on the subject, the more bitter he became concerning it.

And Margaret's husband was not successful; that was the crowning offence. If he had made a lucky hit—painted some picture that would have proved his fortune, and taken the world by surprise, the offence might have been forgiven, and the stone of stumbling rolled away. But, alas! it was not so.

He was direly unsuccessful. He had talent—so, at least, his wife imagined—but the world never recognised it. He painted pictures, but they did not sell. He was reduced from one extremity to

another. He tried teaching, but it failed. Perhaps he had not the requisite patience; perhaps he lacked perseverance. His wife let no one into the secret; it was buried with him when, at last, sickness and a broken heart did their worst, and he was carried to the grave.

What a life she had had—that girl crowned with roses! That once happy Margaret!

Would the old man forgive? Would he take her to his heart and home again? Would her wounds be healed, her sorrows wiped away? Would it all end happily, as in some story-book or fable? Adela feared not.

She knew how inflexible he was, and how unforgetting. She knew the very mention of the name of Margaret was forbidden.

What was she to do? What would be required of her? It was a new and puzzling experience.

The sisters had been strangers all their lives. When Adela was a child, Margaret had been a woman. Adela could just remember the Margaret of old. She could recall the shining locks and the blue eyes, undimmed then, and not sunken with grief and weary vigils.

It puzzled her to imagine by what process the change had taken place.

Could this, indeed, be Margaret?

CHAPTER V.

MARGARET'S REQUEST.

MARGARET read what her sister was thinking. She was quick and apt to decipher expressions, and the whole argument lay before her clear as daylight. She was prepared for the question asked with perplexity and even shame: "What brings you here? What is it you want?"

"Nothing for myself," was the quick reply. "Nothing—nothing!"

Adela glanced at the shabby dress and the worn face, and she said, with a touch of feeling, "I know what ought to be done. I would do it myself. I would say come—come, at once, to our home and hearts. But my father——"

"You need not tell me. I know! I know!" interrupted Margaret, quickly.

"Have you ever written to him?—have you ever tried that means?" resumed Adela. "Perhaps——"

"Once," again interrupted the other quickly—"once I did, when my husband was in his last illness; in one terrible strait I wrote."

"And did he answer?"

"No!"

Again that troubled expression on Adela's face. What could her sister want of her? Ah, it could be but one thing, say what she might. And she began to play with her golden bracelet.

But one thing—money. Well, she would give her money—as much, at least, as she could spare. And

there was no time to lose. The sooner this interview came to an end the better.

Margaret guessed as much by a kind of intuition. She knew her sister wanted to be rid of her; that the company was coming, and the old hall would be gay with lights and music.

There was no place for her here, not even for the sole of her foot. Well, she would go, but not till she had told her errand. And she would tell it at once, briefly and boldly.

She had a little daughter. (Here the warm flush came on her cheek, and the mother's love shone in her eyes.) The child was unfit to struggle with its lot—it was so delicate, so fragile. Its very life hung in the balance. She could not screen it, or give it the care it needed. Might she place it here, in comfort and security, while she struggled out yonder for her bread? There was no gainsaying the fact of how hard that struggle would be.

She spoke with great earnestness. The pleading tones of her voice were scarcely to be resisted.

Adela was not unmoved, but she was astonished at the request. Indeed, it seemed at first impossible to entertain it for a moment. "If your child came here," she said at length, half bewildered at the idea, "you would have to part with it. How can you bear that, Margaret?"

Margaret pressed her hand to her heart. "Yes, I can bear it," replied she slowly, and as if the concession were wrung from her by an agony of dread lest the child should die.

Adela stood silent and thoughtful. This was a newer experience still. "Where is your child?" asked she.

"Here, in the town. You can see her. If only you see her, you will love her. Do you think I could bear to see her waste away and die?—that I could leave her long hours alone, she who wants such care and tending? Oh, Adela, my sister Adela, have pity on me, and help to save my child!"

Adela had pity; but she was sorely perplexed.

A sound of horses' feet, and a ring at the bell, broke short the conference.

"Oh, I must go!" cried she, starting from her reverie—"I must go, Margaret, but I will see you again. Where? Quick! Tell me where?"

Margaret told her. She had the address written down, and she gave it to her sister.

Adela would see her in the morning, without fail. And here was a piece of gold. That, surely, would heal some sorrows. But Margaret would not take the gold—she went away, leaving it behind her.

CHAPTER VI.

BRINGING HOME THE BRIDE.

HORACE VINCENT had been married a fortnight, and had just brought home his bride. Whether for good or evil, for weal or for woe, the deed was done, and

was past recal. He had taken the house, and furnished it. He had made all his arrangements; in haste, it is true, but Ruth's position demanded that it should be so, else she had been left without even a shelter. As it was, she had fled into this tower of refuge, and was safe.

At this starting-point of his married life, Horace thought he was very happy indeed. Here was the sweet loving girl to sit opposite to him, and to make his home happy; to be his dear companion and solace in this working weary world.

Why did he, even now, hesitate at that word *companion*? Why did he break off the web of his speculations abruptly, and with a kind of mental reservation?

How bright and cheerful everything looked, on that first evening! Everything was new, and sparkling, and untried. Horace had furnished the house well, and with taste. "It is better to do it well in the beginning," he had said. And when a feeling of anxiety came into his mind as to the cost, he would meet it by another observation. "I am getting on; I shall soon make it all right," he would say. "Besides, I shall have a wife to look after my affairs. Of course all ladies understand housekeeping. It is their vocation."

On this head he had no doubts whatever. Still there were many thoughts that were inclined to harass him. He would like to tell Ruth exactly how he stood. He would like to hear her say that she was mistress of the position; that his views were her views.

Once or twice, she had let drop a remark which had led him to suppose that she fancied his riches were unlimited. He must undeceive her on that head. And what time more suitable than now?—now, when they were both starting in life—when to blunder would be most embarrassing, if not disastrous?

He had lighted up the gas, for it was getting dark. Dinner was over, and he was sitting by his own fireside, hearing her sing. She sang very sweetly. He had bought her a new piano, and her nimble fingers went running up and down the keys. "I soon get tired of playing," she said, rising abruptly; "it reminds one so of the days of one's drudgery; and I never liked music."

"Come here, Ruth, and sit by me. I love music passionately. I have promised myself the pleasure of hearing you sing every night."

"I want to make some wax flowers. My aunt had me taught. It is the only occupation I really like," said she, making no answer to his observation.

"What do we want wax flowers for?" asked he, in rather a dismayed tone.

"Oh, I shall make a group for the middle of the drawing-room table. I can get all the materials at that new shop."

He was silent a minute. "Are the materials expensive, Ruth?"

"Oh, no—not very."

"Because," said he, gravely, "my little wife must not fancy she has married a rich man. We must live carefully, and be very industrious, and then perhaps we can afford to make wax flowers by-and-by."

She laughed. "Horace, you must make a little sketch of the bouquet before you go to-morrow. The first thing after breakfast I shall set off——"

"Stay, Ruth; it is time, dear, we had a little talk together. There will be a great deal for you to do without buying materials for wax flowers."

"What shall I have to do?" And her eyes were turned upon him with innocent wonder.

"There will be household matters, dear. I don't pretend to understand them, but of course you do. You are a first-rate housekeeper, are you not, little woman?"

She laughed again. "You are, Ruth?" he asked, with some anxiety.

"I don't know much about housekeeping, Horace. You forget I was a governess."

He was silent a few minutes, and looked thoughtfully into the fire.

"Martha did all the housekeeping," continued Ruth. "My aunt said she could not pretend to be troubled with teaching me."

He was still silent.

"And of course, now I have a servant of my own, I can do the same," said Ruth triumphantly.

He was silent a few more minutes. There was an

odd sensation in his mind, or rather a mixture of sensations, which he could not exactly explain or understand.

"Ruth," said he at length, "when young people such as you and I are beginning life, there is nothing like prudence and economy. I am not rich. I told you so before. My whole income is not more than one hundred and fifty pounds at present."

"Oh, but that is a great deal, Horace," said she, still triumphantly. "My aunt had not nearly so much. I call you quite a rich man."

"With your good management, dearest, I may be one. A man who lives within his income, and puts by a little every year, is in my opinion rich. What do you say, Ruth?"

She was not listening to him in the least.

"And if I get on and do well, we may be able to take a larger house, and be in rather a different position. There is an old saying, Ruth, that a man must ask his wife how he is to live."

"I don't want a better house, Horace. I think this is delightful. I like to look out on the marketplace. It is as cheerful again as High Street was."

"But you would like me to succeed?"

"I don't know. I am quite satisfied with you as you are."

And the smile with which the words were spoken was so sweet, that all other thoughts were driven out of his head. Nor did he venture any further remarks on domestic economy the whole of the evening.


(To be continued.)

WORDS IN SEASON.

THE TRANSFIGURATION—II.

BY THE REV. CANON BATEMAN, M.A., VICAR OF MARGATE.

III.—BRIGHT VISIONS.

 F the wondrous vision we are considering took place in the night season, the effect would be more striking, and the converse more impressive, in contrast with the dark and silent world. It is not improbable; for our Lord was wont to spend his nights in prayer; and St. Luke tells us that it was "the next day" when they came down from the mount. Probably the vision may have just prevented the dawn; and when they came down, the day had begun; and the world, awaking, was ready with one of its many tales of sorrow.

The transaction itself was as true as God's own word could make it; and as real as the highest effort of human art could depict it. Who that has read the simple yet graphic account of the three Evangelists, and the plain though indirect allusion by the fourth—"we beheld His glory, the glory as

of the only begotten of the father" (John i. 14)—does not feel instinctively that the narrative is true, even if St. Peter had not himself set his seal to it as an eye-witness in his second epistle?—"We have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount" (2 Peter i. 16).

And who that has ever gazed in reality or in representation, upon that wonderful creation of genius, "The Transfiguration," even as left unfinished by the dying hand, and borne aloft in the funeral procession of Raffaele—the greatest painter, perhaps, who ever lived—can have failed

to realise the scene? The Lord is transfigured, and soars in mid-air. Attendant upon Him as the central figure, are Moses and Elias, representatives of the law and the prophets, one of whom never saw death, and the other of whom God himself buried. They float buoyantly like spirits of light and glory, whilst paying homage to the Lord of light and glory. Moses sees in him the mediator of the "better covenant;" Elijah, him to whom "gave all the prophets witness." Promises, types, symbols, passovers, sin-offerings, are about to pass away, and by the "decease to be accomplished in Jerusalem," the Gospel is to be for ever established, and One "made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." There may be anomalies in this representation; for genius often oversteps the fixed boundaries of time and space; but they are necessary for the elucidation of the subject. If something of earth had not been introduced, there would have been less of heaven. The dark shades of the one throw out the bright lights of the other. The three disciples are said to sleep, and seem to sleep; but God "openeth their ears" to receive instruction. It is plain that they hear the Divine converse, and recognise by it the Divine messengers. The anxious Father, the struggling child, the interested spectators, the powerless apostles, all serve to contrast the sins and sorrows of this mortal life with the glory that shall one day be revealed; all serve to point to Him who came to destroy the works of the devil.

How wonderful THE BOOK which reveals such things! How wonderful the art which gives expression and reality to them!

And during our Christian course, have we known no bright visions? Have we never realised that "the joy of the Lord is our strength?" There are many desponding Christians who linger too long at the tomb, and scarcely realise the fact that "the Lord is risen indeed." Tears are their meat day and night. They are always writing bitter things against themselves. They look downwards at their own works and deservings: and not upwards at their Lord's finished work and prevailing advocacy. They feel as if called to answer for themselves; and never say, "Thou shalt answer for me, O Lord." The consequence is, that their chariot-wheels drive heavily, and they make but little progress. It is not God's will that they should be thus burdened, but "their own infirmity." Tears are fitting for the penitent, but not for the believer. Weep, when you think of sin, and when you kneel before the cross confessing sin; but rejoice, when you think of the handwriting that was against you and contrary to you, taken out of the way and nailed to that cross. Intercourse is not pleasant with one whose eyes are always full of tears, and whose

tongue is always full of complaints. Such an one may call for sympathy—and words of encouragement and comfort become well the Christian counsellor. But if, in spite of all that you can say, the crane still "chatters," the dove still "mourns," the eyes still "fail with looking upwards;" then the intercourse soon ceases to be either pleasant or profitable.

And why should it not be so with God? Why should he prefer tears to smiles? Ezra was right when he said to the people, "Go your way, eat the fat and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry, for the joy of the Lord is your strength" (Neh. viii. 10).

There is nothing sweeter than to realise our high privileges as the people of God, and to indulge the bright visions of present grace and future glory which is their heritage. To enjoy the comforts of religion; to realise the fatherhood of God; to think of the continual intercession of our great High Priest; to go in and out as those who are freed from condemnation; to feel safe; to serve in newness of life; to have cloudless access to the Mercy Seat; to cast all cares on him who careth for us; to have our names written in the Book of Life; to discern the "mark" upon our foreheads; to feel the "white stone" in our hands; to crave for no novelties; to need no excitements; to walk in old paths; to be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; this is the heritage of God's people; this makes their garments white and their faces shining. It only wants what it will have in heaven, and not before—the element of endurance. Bright visions do not last. We are prompt enough to suggest the building of "tabernacles;" but we know not what we say.

When St. Peter realised the bright vision before him, he suggested the building of "three tabernacles." He would have given permanence to that which was transitory. He would have had his Lord always thenceforth surrounded with a halo of light and glory. He would have had Moses and Elias abiding upon this earth. That the vision was to pass away so soon, never crossed his mind. It was "good," and he would have had that good permanent, just as in our sacred seasons and times of "refreshing from the presence of the Lord," we would fain retain, and ever hold fast, what in themselves are but foretastes of the glory that shall be revealed hereafter. Joy and peace in believing; spiritual attainments in the divine life; Christian privileges; Church communion; a faithful ministry; the fellowship of the saints; these are but as transfigurations. They are transitory. They flicker and change; appear and disappear. They are like the summer lightning playing about the

air, rather than the fire ever burning upon the altar.

After edification in God's house; after the enjoyment of brotherly intercourse; after our hearts have been burning at the breaking of bread—we are ready to say, "Surely it is good for us to be here!" Surely the good savour of the feast will remain! Surely our hearts will not again grow cold, nor our feet wander from the right way!" Alas! we know not what we say; some temptation is often close at hand, and Satan is ready to catch us at the rebound: and when we come down from the third heaven, we meet the buffet and feel the thorn; when we see bright visions, and talk of building tabernacles, there comes the overshadowing cloud!

IV.—OVERSHADOWING CLOUDS.

These often come when we least expect them, and they put an end to bright visions, and all idea of building tabernacles! Three peculiarities seem attached to them: they excite fear; they have a voice; they pass away.

1. They excite fear. "Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here, and let us build three tabernacles. . . . While he thus spake, there came a cloud and overshadowed them; and they feared as they entered into the cloud."

Ah! while he thus spake! While we are reckoning on some earthly thing—when, like David in his prosperity, we are saying, "I shall never be moved: Lord, by thy power thou hast made my mountain to stand strong;" when, like Job, we are thinking, "I shall die in my nest; I shall multiply my days as the sand;" when some of our plans, long laid, are on the very eve of their accomplishment; when a few steps more, and the summit of the mountain will be gained; when one effort more, and the prize will be within our grasp—then, just then, the cloud envelops us, and all is hidden.

We are seized with sudden fear. "What is about to happen?" we say, when prospects, hitherto fair, are suddenly obscured; when health, hitherto strong, begins to fail; when the pulse, heretofore calm, begins to quicken; when the family, once united, begins to be broken up; when the footprints, so far plain, begin to disappear. Under such circumstances, we often feel a sense of awe and apprehension. "What is about to happen? Whereunto will all this grow? How can I act without accustomed guidance? What if I shall not live out half my days?" Thus of us, as of the disciples, it may be said, "They feared as they entered into the cloud."

One way to avoid this is to do and say as David did and said:—"Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too

high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child" (Ps. cxxi. 1, 2). When we have served God for many years, and maintained a good profession; when men begin to look up to us, and seek counsel at our hands; when we have borne the yoke, and passed safely through the discipline of sorrows; when we have leaned on Christ's breast, stood by his cross, and triumphed in his resurrection—we are then apt to think that we can bear prosperity, that our manna will keep for many days, that the sunshine will do us no harm, that Satan when he cometh will "find nothing in us." Alas! let us be at ease again; let strong and vigorous health return; let the "time of our wealth" come quickly after the "time of our tribulation;" and we shall feel how strong the "body of this death" still is; how prompt and prone we are to build again the things that we had destroyed; how corruption springs up in the sunshine; how needful is the cloud to bring down the heat!

Keep thy soul low, O Christian man, if you would pass unhurt and without fear from adversity to prosperity; from reproach to reputation; from the pinching of poverty to fulness of bread; from the tossings of the sea to the tranquillity of the haven; from bright visions to overshadowing clouds.

2. They have a voice. The disciples heard the voice, and it told them of Jesus. "This is my beloved Son," it said, "in whom I am well pleased." If we listen we shall also hear these, or such-like words—words confirmatory of our faith, or consolatory under our trials. You think that some strange thing has happened unto you, that some enemy has been loosed against you, that you are cast out of God's sight, and, therefore, are overshadowed by the cloud. But, no; there is a voice in it—a voice of power—a voice telling of one "able and willing to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him"—a voice testifying of one who is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities"—a voice bidding us trust in him, and we shall never be confounded.

"What you are suffering under," it says, "is not by chance. It is ordered in all things, and sure. It will subserve your salvation. It is the Shepherd's crook to guide you to good, but, perhaps, forsaken pastures. It is the Refiner's fire to purge the dross, and purify the silver, and enable you to offer the sacrifice of righteousness. It is the rod in the hand of the Schoolmaster to bring you to Christ."

Hear ye "the rod, and who hath appointed it." Turn to him that smiteth. Before long your training will be ended, and you will be fitted for everlasting life.

3. They pass away. All clouds pass. They are temporary in their very nature—threatening, but not lasting. The Christian should never give way to despondency. He should never decide anything whilst enveloped in the cloud, but wait till it has passed away. "I will trust, and not be afraid," said the prophet; and we should learn to say the same.

Some, when stricken down, think they shall never rise again. The spring of their happiness fails; they think the water will never burst out again. Their health is gone; they think that it will never return. The wound is painful; they think it will never heal.

All such cases require gentle handling, and Christ deals gently with them. How many amongst us can testify that he has been better to us than all our fears? that he has often dispersed our clouds, and caused his sun again to shine? that he has put a new song in our mouths, even thanksgiving unto our God. Gratitude, as well as penitence, brings us to his feet, giving him thanks.

V.—JESUS ONLY.

When the cloud had passed, and the disciples had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save "Jesus only." Neither cloud nor vision alter him. He is the same Jesus, whether transfigured on the mountain, or nailed upon the cross. No harm can happen to us at his side. The fire in the furnace will never burn, when "the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

It is good for us when thus lifting up our eyes, we see "Jesus only;" for in him we find everything we cannot find in ourselves. He is an all-sufficient and unchangeable Saviour; and this appears most strikingly in contrast with our changeableness and frailty.

Consider, first, *our health*. What a slight tenure we have of it. For the moment, we may be "lusty and strong;" but then comes some insidious disease sapping the very springs of life, or some sudden stroke disabling and laying us prostrate, or some accident incapacitating us from all future usefulness, or some "thorn in the flesh" making life a burden. Or if not these, there is the imperceptible lapse of time, the "grey hairs here and there," though we know it not; the "labour and sorrow" which tell that our life will be soon cut off, and that we shall flee away.

Consider *our wealth*. We have been busied, perhaps, in "buying, and selling, and getting gain." Our warehouses and barns may be filled with all manner of store; we may have provision laid up for many days; we may be saying, "Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." And then suddenly shall we see all these riches making to themselves wings and flying away.

You cannot make that certain which is essentially uncertain. You may have caged your birds, and resolved to be prudent, and to keep that you have gained; but who shall keep the keeper? A very little inducement is sufficient often to make him open the cage—and it is soon empty!

Consider *our happiness*. This is not entirely dependent either upon health or wealth, but it is equally changeable. One thorn is enough to make a nest uncomfortable. A very small root of bitterness springing up will trouble us. Some Mordecai sits in the gate; or some Naboth will not part with his vineyard; or some Michaiiah prophesies evil things concerning us. Or if we are God's children, we often make ourselves unhappy by repining under his discipline, and thinking that he hath forgotten to be gracious, or fretting because of the ungodly. Doubts raise many a ripple on the mind's quiet sea. Though told how "that which is crooked, cannot be made straight" we weary ourselves with trying. Hence disappointment, hence restlessness, hence unhappiness.

Consider *our prospects*. They are always changing as we journey onwards. The hill and the valley, the sunshine and the cloud, the fine dawn and the rainy day, the smooth road and the stony pass, the buoyant beginning and the weary ending, await all life's travellers. None know what a day may bring forth.

Consider *our home circle*. This is always changing. Each familiar spot calls forth a sigh or a tear for those who have "gone before;" whilst the gaps in later life are never made up. We feel how many have been made, and then—we make one more.

Consider *our church circle*. The minister on whose lips we hung, and from whose teaching we used to receive warning or encouragement, is removed. The seat so long occupied by a worshipper of God who cheered all around by his example, is vacant. The family with whom we took sweet counsel and walked to the house of God as friends, has passed away. Looking round the church after a lapse of years, we are compelled to say, *How changed!*

Yet amidst all these changes, Christ Jesus our Lord remains unchangeable. He is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. His welcome is the same; his promises the same; his support the same; his pity the same; his power the same. All things change save "Jesus only," and he is unchangeable.

Let Moses therefore depart; for the law cannot save. Let Elijah ascend up where he was before; for a prophet's teaching without an atonement, availeth not. And let us all abide with "Jesus only" who of God is "made unto us wisdom," and



"With a reproachful look at Jenny I rose to go."—p. 26.

righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Let him be our hearts' only Lord. In the church let us recognise "Jesus only;" at the holy table and sacramental feast let us adore "Jesus only;"

in all life's changes let us lean upon "Jesus only." And then, in heaven's glory, clothed with light as with a garment, we shall one day see "Jesus only."

A GRINDER'S STORY.

IN TWO PARTS.—BY GEORGE MANVILLE FENN.

PART II.



DID not go up to the Lees that night, but the next evening upon walking up after work-hours, I found John Ross there; and that on all sides I was received with a studied coldness.

The old people were quite gruff, and their daughter only replied quietly to my questions. I soon found that my presence acted as a restraint upon the party, and with a reproachful look at Jenny I rose to go.

I did not see the tears that rose to Jenny's eyes as I left; for I was meeting the triumphant looks of John Ross, and trying to smother down the bitterness that rose in my breast.

"He must have been poisoning them against me," I muttered, as I took my solitary way towards the town. "I wonder what he has said!" then I began to think of how I had come between him and his happiness, and accused myself of selfishness, and at last reached my lodgings determined to fight down my disappointment, and to try to forget it in work.

I fought hard, and it would be beyond words to tell the misery of my solitary heart as I kept steadfastly from the Lees, working early and late to drive away my thoughts, and too much taken up with my own affairs to observe the strange, sullen way in which I was treated by the other men in the wheel. I did notice John Ross's scowls; but knowing their cause, I did not pay much heed to them, telling myself that I was serving him to the best of my ability, and that if he knew all I suffered, he would only be too glad to offer me the hand of good fellowship.

"He'll find it out for himself some day," I said with a sigh, and went on with my work.

Perhaps everybody does not know what I mean when I speak of wheel-bands, so let me explain that to every grindstone there are endless leathern straps, to connect them with the main shafts set in motion by the water-wheel; and by means of these connections each man's stone is made to revolve. As a matter of course, if these bands were removed, a man's grindstone would be motionless, and work impossible; and though such acts were common enough in some wheels, nothing of the kind had taken place on our stream, so that I was

perfectly astounded one morning upon going to work to find that my bands had been cut.

I took it to be meant as a joke, so, though much annoyed, I merely set to, and looking as good-humoured as possible, repaired my bands after a rough fashion, so that, saving one or two breaks down, I managed to get a pretty good day's work done.

There was plenty of bantering going on, not of a pleasant jovial kind, but of a sneering harsh nature, and I went home that night disheartened and put out. I did not give John Ross the credit of the trick, as being too small; and I began to hope too that he saw me in my right light. But there was another stab for me that night, for passing along one of the streets whom should I meet but John himself, walking by the side of Jenny Lee and her mother.

Jenny looked hard at me, for I moved to her as I passed; but it seemed to me that she only looked on my salute with contempt, and I passed on feeling more bitter than ever.

The next morning on going to work my bands were gone, and the only reply to my inquiries was a hoarse kind of laughter mingled with jeers. I could see now plainly enough that, probably incited by John Ross, the men intended to make my life so unpleasant at the wheel that I should be glad to seek for work elsewhere.

"Don't want no such independent men here," shouted somebody, and several other remarks were made of a like nature.

"I can give way when I'm in the wrong, John Ross," I muttered to myself; "but if you're at the bottom of this, I intend to show you that mine is consistency of behaviour and not cowardice." So, quietly leaving the wheel, I took no heed to the laughter and jeers of the men, but went back to the town, bought new bands, and, to the surprise of those who had thought me driven away, went on with my work as though nothing had happened.

"I should take them bands home t'-night, lad," said one, jeeringly.

"Ay, they wean't be safe here," said another.

But I let them banter away, though I took care that my new bands should not be stolen, rolling them up and carrying them away with me every night when I left off work.

This only served to increase the animosity of the men, and sneers and sullen looks were hurled at me from morn till night, till at times I began to ask myself whether it would not be wiser to seek elsewhere for work. But I always came to one conclusion—that I was in the right, and that it would be miserable cowardice on my part to give up.

So I kept on suffering in silence every insult and annoyance, such as, to their disgrace be it said, some working men are only too ready to heap upon any fellow-toiler who has had the misfortune to make himself obnoxious.

And so matters went on till one morning, when, passing a number of lowering faces, I made my way to my seat, slipped on my hands, and then, not noticing that the others were lingering about against door and window, took up the first of the knife-blades I had to grind, and applied it to the stone. There was the sharp "chirring" noise, the sparks darted away from beneath the blade, and then there was a sharp blinding flash, a dull report, and I felt myself dashed back, scorched, half stunned, and helpless, but still sensible enough to know that some dastardly hand had placed a quantity of gunpowder where the sparks from my stone would fly—a cruel cowardly act that was not new in those days—and as I lay there and groaned, I believe it was as much from agony of mind as of body; for it seemed so mean, so despicable, that it was hard to believe that men living in a Christian country could be guilty of such an act.

But there were some there who did not sympathise with the outrage; and three or four lifted me up, and would have taken me to the infirmary, but I begged them to hear me to my lodgings, and then fetch a doctor.

"I'd tell 'ee, lad, who put in the poother," said one of them, whispering in my ear, "but I daren't."

"I don't want to know, Jack Burkin," I groaned, as I lay there in the dark, "I'd rather not hear;" and as I spoke my heart seemed to tell me who was my enemy.

"I wish the poor girl might have chosen a better husband," I said to myself that night, as I lay there sleepless from pain, for the doctor had done what he could for me, and I lay waiting for the day. Not that I could see it, for all was blank now to me; and as I thought, I pictured myself as I felt I should be in the future—a tall, stout man, with vacant eyes and a seamed and scarred face; for I knew that I was fearfully scorched, and that hair, eyebrows, and lashes were burned off, and my face terribly disfigured.

It was a bitter time that, but though the pain was still most keen, I laughed at it after the first four-and-twenty hours, glorying in and blessing

the day that had laid me helpless there; and I'll tell you the reason why.

John Ross had overshot the mark, while I had been blinder than I was at the present time, when a happy light darted into my understanding, and I learnt that I was not to be the solitary man I had expected.

I was lying in pain and bitterness on the afternoon after the accident, all in darkness. The doctor had been to dress my blackened face and hands once more, but he had given me but little comfort when I had asked him about my sight, only telling me that we must be hopeful. "And what was I to do when blind?" I asked myself. Certainly, I had saved up a little money, but I knew that would not last long, and that it would be sunken by the doctor's bill.

"Pity I did not go into the infirmary," I groaned, and then I felt ready to eat my words, for a sweet little sad voice, that made my heart leap, said, "May I come in?"

I could not have answered to have saved my life, but only groan and try to turn away my face, lest she should see it—my blackened and scarred face, disfigured with cotton-wool and dressing, my head with every scrap of hair scorched off—and, had I been able, I should have tried to hide it with my hands, but they too, with my arms, were burned and bandaged, and I could only slightly turn my head and groan, as I thought of my past manly looks, and trembled to be seen by the bright-faced girl who had first made my heart to beat more swiftly.

"May I come in?" was repeated again, but still I could not answer; and then there was the light sound of a step crossing the chamber floor, a rustle by the bedside, and I heard some one go down upon her knees, and felt two little gentle hands laid upon one of my arms, and a sweet little voice sobbing, "Oh Harry! oh Harry! that it should come to this!"

Speak! I could not speak; and as to pain, I believe, with the exultation then in my heart, I could have borne the keenest pangs that ever fell to the lot of man.

She did not love John Ross, then, and never had, or she would not have come to me then to lay bare the secret of her pure young heart. Had I been well and strong, and had the sense to have followed up the opportunity once given, she would have been quiet and retiring; but now, in this perilous time—for I learnt after that I was in danger, and that this was known—Jenny had come to my bedside, like some ministering angel, to tend and comfort me.

I could speak at last though, even if it was but in a whisper; and in those long hours, as she sat by my side, all reserve was cast aside; and, speaking as one who only looked upon things as

they might have been, I told her how I loved her, and how I had kept away, believing that she would be happier with John Ross.

I learnt now of his pettiness, of the way in which he had defamed me; but let that pass. I could forgive him all since I learned that he had never gained entrance to the little heart beating by my side. I learned, too, of Jenny's suspicions, aroused by a purchase she had seen the young man make, at a shop in the town, one day when she was not perceived, but I would not have the thought harboured, for I bore him no malice then. And at last I groaned again, and the weak tears forced themselves into my poor smarting eyes as the thought would come of what might have been, and of how I must not indulge in such ideas now, binding the fair young girl by my side to a scarred and blinded man. I knew that I must be hideous to look upon, but in my ignorance I knew not the heart placed by God in a true woman's breast, and I could only groan again as I felt a little soft cheek laid to mine, cruelly burned as it was, and the tender sympathising voice ask me if I was in much pain.

"Only of the heart, Jenny," I whispered, "as I think of what I might have been."

And then her sobbing question, as she asked me not to think it unmaidenly and bold of her to come to me, and to talk as she had done.

What could I say, but ask God's blessing upon her head as her little light step crossed the floor? And then the brightness seemed to have gone, and all was once more darkness.

Day after day she was at my side, to read to me gentle words of hope and resignation; and when, more than once, I spoke of my altered looks, my scarred face and sightless eyes, telling her how it cut me to the heart to say it, but that all this must end, for I should not be acting as a man if I bound her to such a wreck, spoiling her fair young life, did she not tell me she could love me better than if I had been as I was before, begging me not to send her away, lest I should break her heart?

And it was almost in happiness one day that I lay there, very weak and helpless. I had been delirious, and very nigh unto death. The light still burned, but the oil was low and the flame danced and flickered so that at any moment it might expire. In the days of my strength I had looked upon death with horror, trembling almost at the name; but now, quite sensible as I lay there, as I thought, waiting for its coming, it was with a strange calm feeling of resignation. There was no

dread; I only felt happy and at ease, for those pure little lips at my side had hour after hour offered up prayers in my behalf to where prayers are heard, and with the sincere hope of forgiveness for what I had done amiss, I lay waiting till my eyes should close in the last long sleep. I was sorry, and yet glad, for I felt that it would be cruel to poor Jenny to get well; and though I knew her true heart and her love for me, what was there in the future for her if she took to her heart a blind and maimed husband?

And then the flame grew stronger, ceasing to flicker, and burning with a faint but steady flame—a flame that brightened day by day, for the wreck had withstood the shock, and hope would come back, whispered as it was in my too willing ears.

Then, too, there came a day when there was, as it were, a pale dawn before my eyes—a dawn which took months before it fully broke into day; when after a good long look at my altered face, I took the stick I had not yet been able to lay aside, and one bright afternoon in early spring made my way up to the Leeros, to find the parents out, but Jenny at home.

And we talked long and earnestly that day, for I had made up my mind to be a man. I knew that I should always be plain, almost to distortion, and I told myself that it was my duty to offer once more to set her free.

Jenny had been weeping silently for some time, when, turning to me, she said, gently, "Don't think me irreverent, Harry, but do you remember how God chose David to be king over his people?"

I nodded, for my heart seemed swelled unto bursting, and I could not speak.

"He looked upon the heart," sobbed Jenny; "and oh, Harry, I have tried to choose my king like that."

People call this world a vale of sorrows, and I pity those who always speak like that, for they can never have felt the happiness that was mine that night, as two fond arms clasped my neck, and a loving cheek was laid to mine, and they were those of her who has been the wife of these fifteen happy years.

I believe that there are those who think us a strangely-matched couple, and that our little ones all favour their mother; but they don't know all, for my foolish little wife is even proud of her husband.

John Ross went to Australia, it is said, soon after my accident. I hope he is a changed man.

AT THE DOOR.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock."

WHO is this that calls to me
Through the blind and fearful night,
Where I grope and cannot see,
Who is this that brings me light?
Ah! 'tis Jesus; he alone
Seeks me through my wayward years,
And upon my heart of stone
Rains a Saviour's burning tears.
See, without my heart He stands,
Knocking long and patiently;
Bruised and bleeding are His hands,
Wounded is His side for me.

Oh, my Saviour! not in vain.
I will ope the stubborn door.
Evermore with me remain;
Sojourn here for evermore.
Then on Thee my cares I'll lay—
Simon bore Thy cross with Thee—
So, when oft my strength gives way,
Thou wilt bear my cross with me.
Keep me through the troublous Now;
Be in death my life, O Lord,
And beyond the stars be Thou
My exceeding great reward.

F. C. WILLS.

THE HAREBELL.

WE know the name of these flowers, Mary," said Emily, holding up a bunch of blue harebells.

"Yes," added Charles, "and we've brought them to show you, because they look like flowers you could tell a story about."

"Now, Charles," said Emily, "it is very funny of you to say flowers look like a story!"

"Charles is right, however," replied Mary. "I had an adventure once connected with a bunch of harebells, which I am sure it will interest you to hear; but first let me ask where you found these?"

"Growing on a high bank, near the road-side. I could get a great deal more there if you wish."

"Yes, I know it is very abundant in some places, but when I was a child I had never seen this species of wild campanula, although my mother had often described to me its slender stems, round leaves, and bell-shaped flowers."

"You must make a mistake, Mary, there are no round leaves on the plants we found; see these little slender blades like grass which grow on the stalk, they cannot be what you mean."

"No, those are the stem-leaves; but when the plant is young, there are a number of round notched leaves at the base, which, as it increases in size, usually wither away. Still, on account of these, the harebell is called 'round-leaved campanula,' to distinguish it from every other species of the bell-flower tribe."

"Now, please, Mary, the story."

"Well, when I was about thirteen, I went to stay with some friends near the sea. The family consisted of the mother, who was a widow lady, two girls of nearly my own age, called Grace and Caroline, and one brother, a few years older. They were all very kind to me, and endeavoured to make my visit pass

as pleasantly as possible, by taking me about to see all the beauties of the neighbourhood. There was one place at some distance which they were particularly anxious to show me; but there were many difficulties in the way. First, it was a long drive; next, the road was bad; and thirdly, Mrs. Austin would not consent to our going alone; and she was much too delicate to undertake such an expedition.

"Just when we had come to the conclusion that the thing was impossible, an invitation arrived for all of us young people to join a pic-nic got up by some families in the neighbourhood, to this very place. Mrs. Austin willingly allowed us to go under such favourable circumstances; and meantime many were the descriptions which I received from my friends of the beauties of the scenery, and many the pieces of prudent advice from their mother to avoid dangerous parts of the cliffs, as she had heard some years before of a boy, in search of the eggs of sea-fowls, who, having lost his balance on a precipitous wall of rock, had fallen headlong and been dashed to pieces.

"Of course we all promised to be very cautious, but in my heart I thought her exceedingly silly to suppose that girls of our age could be foolish enough to run into danger. It was not likely we would climb cliffs after sea-birds' eggs, like little boys; we, who knew how to conduct ourselves quite as well as grown people. I am sorry to say, that at that time I was very wise and prudent in my own eyes, and consequently apt to despise the advice of my elders.

"The long looked for day arrived at last, and was as fine as we could wish. Early in the morning we set out, and arrived at our destination before noon; and although I had heard so many glowing descriptions, I was not in the least disappointed. It was a noble promontory, jutting out into the sea, in every variety of form. At the base of the cliffs the waves roared

and chafed in angry foam. Inland was a mountain, not very lofty, but extremely picturesque in shape. This we climbed, and arriving at the summit, sat down to enjoy the view, and to rest after our exertions.

"I had already met many wild flowers with which I had not previously been acquainted, and had gathered specimens of each to press in blotting paper, intending to find out their names from my mother, when I should return home. I had succeeded in interesting my friend Caroline in botanical pursuits, and she also carried a large bunch of wild flowers, which she had collected, more indeed for their beauty than as specimens.

"Many of the company admired our bouquets, and one gentleman remarked, that we had gathered most of the mountain flowers, but that on the paths near the sea there were a great variety of rare marine plants.

"Oh, do let us go and look for them!" I exclaimed.

"So we shall, presently," replied the gentleman, "but some of us are not sufficiently rested."

"I am not at all tired," I said, rising quickly. "Who will come with me?"

"We will," replied several voices, and six or seven young people started up.

"Come, we shall get down the hill much faster than those lazy people," said Caroline, "and have half our walk over before they begin theirs. The sea-cliffs are so lovely; it is much pleasanter there; come on, I am a very good guide."

"And off we set, scrambling and stumbling among the heather, until we arrived at the foot of the mountain, and made our way as fast as possible towards the sea. Soon we found the cliff path, which wound round the verge of precipitous rocks, opening here and there in abrupt chasms. I saw, as the gentleman had said, many new and strange marine plants, and soon Caroline and I found ourselves in advance of the rest of our party. We called to each other every moment to look at some wonderful discovery, and rushed towards it simultaneously, for it is surprising how much excitement there is in plant hunting.

"Thus led on by our enthusiasm, we were not aware of having far outstripped our companions, until, on looking back and finding them out of sight, I said, 'Oh! Caroline, how much pleasanter it is to be alone with you; the others don't really care for flowers, and can't understand our pleasure in looking for them.'

"But don't you remember," replied Caroline, "mamma told us not to separate from our party, or it would be as bad as going alone, which you know she would not permit."

"I had not forgotten this at all, but I looked upon it as a foolish and unnecessary prohibition, so I replied:

"Well, we can't help it now; if the others choose to lag behind, it's not our fault, and I dare say they are not so far as we think; it's only the windings of the path which hide them from our sight, so let us enjoy ourselves while we are here. I am sure we shall meet them all by-and-by."

"So, on we went for a great way, admiring the scenery and the flowers to our hearts' content, until I suddenly called out, 'Oh! Caroline, look at those lovely blue harebells waving so lightly on that tall cliff; I know them well by description, though I never saw one before. How I wish I could get some; and so we can, for I see a path along the side of the rock, and I am sure if we were there we could reach them; so come along.'

"She followed me up a steep path, until we came to a narrow ledge on the side of the cliff.

"That is a very dizzy looking place," said Caroline. "I don't think we ought to attempt it."

"The path is wide enough for our feet," I replied, "and it is perfectly safe; but if you are frightened, don't come. I shall gather the harebells myself."

"I shall certainly not try," she answered, "for my head always grows giddy on great heights; and remember, mamma told us not to walk in dangerous places; you promised also, so don't mind the harebells, dear Mary, I'm sure we shall find others as we go on; at all events, it is better not to risk your life for them."

"Caroline, you're a great coward, but you're right not to come when you are afraid. My head is very steady, so there's no danger to me."

"Accordingly, I climbed to the rocky path, and walked along bravely, turning my face towards the wall of rock which rose above, and determined not to think of the terrible abyss beneath. Gradually the path became more uneven and sloping, but still pride kept me up until I came to the point where the harebells waved overhead; I stretched my arm to catch their fragile stalks, but in the act I turned slightly round, and caught sight of the precipice beneath. A strange infatuation seized me, I was impelled to stand and gaze on the waves as they fretted and chafed against the rocks, until my eyes swam and my brain reeled. I cannot fully describe to you the sensations which I experienced at that terrible moment; but I lost all presence of mind, and the feeling I was most conscious of was a strange desire to precipitate myself downward; it seemed to me that there was a necessity to do so, from which there could be no escape. My feet certainly were firmly placed, but I dared not move one step in any direction, lest I should be obliged to fling myself forward into those restless billows which roared for my destruction.

"I gave one piercing shriek, and with a great effort compelled myself to turn from the sight which almost maddened me, and catching hold of some roots of heath which grew near the harebells, I clung to them

as if for life. The mere act of holding by this slight support gave me a feeling of confidence.

"Caroline heard my shriek of despair, and called out 'What is the matter? If you are giddy, oh! take care; stay quiet, and I will try to come to you.' Accordingly, she came on cautiously, holding by the heath until within arm's length of me. She told me afterwards, that the idea of the great danger I was in prevented her thinking of herself, and thus she was enabled to walk steadily to my relief.

"Give me your hand, Mary," she said, gently, 'and I will lead you back; the path is wide enough, and you are quite safe if you do not look down.

"Oh! Caroline," I gasped, 'I cannot stir; do not ask me; indeed, I dare not let go the heath to give you my hand; it is all I have to cling to, and I shall certainly fall if I attempt ever to leave this. Oh! that I had taken your mother's advice.'

"Indeed, I wish you had," replied Caroline, 'but we must try to do the best we can now. Do, dear Mary, give me your hand, and then shut your eyes, and I will guide you in safety.'

"No, no," I cried, 'I cannot let go my hold, I cannot move, I feel paralysed.'

"She then tried to take my hand by force, but I struggled and screamed violently.

"Well, stay where you are, if you must," she said, 'and I will go and look for help,' and she left me alone. The agonies of terror which I suffered during the long time she was away, I shall never forget. My mind was in too excited and confused a state to permit me to form a prayer to Him who alone could strengthen me and send relief. It did flash across me that I could not expect God's protection in a situation of danger to which my own pride and disobedience had brought me. Then I longed to acknowledge my fault and beg forgiveness, but I could not, for my faculties all felt paralysed. Yet, God heard the unspoken prayer: for 'He is more ready to hear than we to pray.'

"Caroline could not find any one for a long time. Our friends had gone off in scattered parties in an opposite direction, each supposing we were with some of the others; and after she had gone a great way she turned to come back, fearing to leave me any longer alone.

"Meantime I heard steps approaching the summit of the cliff, and hope revived. I called out as loudly as I could, 'Help, help!' The steps ceased, and I knew some one was looking down the wall of rock against which I clung. Then a voice called out, 'Mary, is it you?'

"I knew Edward Austin's tones, and replied, 'Oh! save me, save me, Edward, I cannot stir.'

"Wait a moment," he replied, 'and I shall go to the rescue.'

"And soon he came round the cliff, and stood where Caroline had been before, and told me to give him my hand, but I could not. Then a gentleman of the party, who had been walking with Edward, came to the other side, and, in spite of my screams, they each seized a hand and led me along the dizzy ledge to safe ground. By this time I was so ill from terror and excitement that I could only lie on the grass and sob convulsively. Caroline, Grace, and several others had now joined us, and they assisted me to the carriage which was to convey us home.

"A long and severe nervous fever followed my adventure. As I could not be moved, my dear mother came and nursed me tenderly, though she was deeply grieved at hearing the cause of my illness. However, it was a useful lesson to me against pride and self-conceit, and ever since the blue harebell has been associated in my mind with humility and lowliness of heart."

R.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

10. A young man who was jealous for his master's honour?

11. "His visage was so marred more than any man's, and his form more than the sons of men" (Isa. lii. 14). Give a fulfilment of this.

12. Which was the honest tribe in Israel?

13. A proof that God observes the acts of children?

14. A man and his two sons who hid themselves from an angel?

15. What relation was Esther to Mordecai?

16. What people waited for a good man to say grace before they sat down to their feast?

17. What king of Israel loved farming?

18. In what passage of Scripture do we find mention of "wise ladies?"

19. Where, in prophetic Scripture, do we read of "pastors?"

20. Who did a brave deed upon "a snowy day?"

ANSWERS.

1. Issachar (1 Chron. xii. 32).

2. Ebed-melech (Jer. xxxix. 16).

3. The dew (Numb. xi. 9).

4. That Christ, the bread of life, rests where the dews of the Spirit have first fallen.

5. Ishmael (Jer. xli. 5, &c.)

6. Deut. xxviii. 49; Matt. xxiv. 28. The eagles indicated the standards of the Romans.

7. Jer. xliii. 10.

8. Elam (Jer. xlix. 36).

9. They put out his eyes. Jer. xlii. 11.

STRAY NOTES.

WHEN Agatharchus boasted of his rapid brush, Zeuxis answered, "I take a long time." A cutting remark from a Zeuxis; but there are those who fancy they must have Zeuxis's touch, simply because they take his time.

THE word "too" or "to" was originally used to intensify verbs as well as adjectives. A remarkable illustration of this use of the word is to be found in Judges ix. 53, a passage often misunderstood, from persons thinking that the word "to" is used here as the sign of the infinitive mood. The passage reads thus—"And a certain woman cast a piece of a millstone upon Abimelech's head, and all to brake his skull." "To brake" is not the infinitive mood here, for then the word should be spelt "break;" but "to" is here an intensifying particle, and the passage means (not that she did it "to break," or for the purpose of breaking his skull), that she "all to brake" (i.e., completely brake or broke) his skull. We still commonly use the word "to" (spelt "too") to intensify adjectives, as "too good," "too large," &c.

IN one of the good Bishop Latimer's sermons occurs the following quaint description of the omnipresence of the Evil one:—

"There is one who is the most diligent prelate and preacher in all England. And will ye know who it is? I will tell you. It is the Devil. He is never out of his benefice; he is never out of his parish; call on him, and you will always find him at home; he is never from his plough."

WE often waste our pity. "How miserable they must be!" we say of others, forgetting that their standard of happiness may not be the same as ours. According to Mr. Oliphant, the Kirghiz consider the banks of the Syr a Paradise, because they find upon them trees actually six feet high! Judged by our own standard, too, many an humble hut would excite our envy rather than our compassion, if we knew more about it. Bright joys are scattered in dark dwellings, as golden amber litters the gloomy Baltic shores; and if sympathy can soothe sorrow, nowhere is it more sincere and copious—no matter if a little coarse—than in lowly homes. Balm grows in the poorest soil, and comforters are plentiful in cottages.

WHEN, after having fought the battle of Copenhagen, Lord Nelson arrived at the Yarmouth roads, and landed on the jetty, his popularity was so great, that he was immediately surrounded with the populace. But Nelson, regardless of all, forced his way sailor-like through the crowd, and, heedless of the

clamour and crush, went on to the hospital in which were many of his wounded men. His demeanour towards them was full of kindness, expressive of tender-hearted interest. He stopped at every bed, and looked with a parental eye on suffering humanity. To every man he addressed himself with a cheerful countenance and cheering words. There was one man who had lost his right arm, which had been cut off close to the shoulder-joint. He especially claimed his attention, and, stopping at his bed, the following interesting dialogue took place:—"Well, Jack, what's the matter with you?" "I have lost my right arm, your honour." Lord Nelson, upon hearing these words, was immediately reminded of his own loss, and after a pause, looking down at his own empty sleeve, and then at the sailor, he said, in a playful tone of voice, "Well, Jack, then you and I are spoiled for fishermen. Cheer up, my brave fellow!"

THE other day we came across the following curious Saxon verse, purporting to contain one of the precepts of King Alfred:—

Thus quoth Alfreð, engle frofre,
Wolde ge nu liben and lusten gære lounde,
And he ge wolde twinen twiseliche twinges,
Hu ge myhten werðas werðricge weiden
And ær gære soules samne to Christo.
Wise wæren the cwothen the said the King Alfreð.

The English of which runs as follows:—

Thus quoth Alfred, England's comfort,
Would that ye did now love and long after your Lord,
And he would govern you wisely,
That ye might have honour in this world,
And yet unite your souls to Christ.
Wise were the sayings of King Alfred.

WE fear that if a monarch of the present day were to publish the like good counsel, the wits of the world would twit him for a taddler, and laugh at the idea of his being called "the comfort of his country."

AN echo, the echo of the cheeriest of sounds—the roguish laughter of my little toddling, blue-eyed fairy; and yet there is sadness in the sound as it comes back to me from the distant corner of the quaint old quadrangle, over the damp grass, littered with russet, gold, and crimson. It is not the fallen leaves, or the neglected grass plat, or the smoky-red houses of antique fashion; wearily gazing at one another with lack-lustre eyes, that must be credited with the sadness. All echoes have that mournful *timbre*. They are the ghosts of voices. No wonder the Caribs thought the dead were speaking when the weird tones rang, or fell far off in dying cadence, as they wandered in their densely-shaded woods. In the north of Europe echoes are still listened to with awe as spirit voices.